

Meditation Master JinBodhi's Dharma Teachings**The Six Perfections: Diligence**
From “Learn About the Six Perfections”

Diligence is following a schedule to practice and carry it out. I call this diligent practice. My understanding is that it lies in action. Is my vow or consciousness helping me be aware if I am wise and healthy? Can I live for 30,000 days? Is my mental state high enough? We need to remind ourselves of these. If not, have I done my practice to improve myself? When should I get up in the morning to practice? What time did I get up?

I should do one good deed daily. What have I done? In dealing with people and matters, have I got angry or afflicted? We should conscientiously be aware of our practice and daily behaviors, because we are not saints yet, nor have we become buddhas, bodhisattvas, or ultimately enlightened. We should be conscious and practicing introspection constantly. In other words, manage our mind well. Am I doing right things?

When I see fellow practitioners who have been here for a few years, I often asked them, "Are you still practicing?"

Most of them flushed, "Master, I'm practicing..."

I doubted, "Are you practicing to be shy?" That you are shy before me indicates you did not practice well. Some, even though they were holding a terminal diagnosis, dared to say, "Master, I'm practicing." They don't diligently practice. I specially admire them. It is as if a hero is standing before me. You don't know when you will suddenly be gone. Under such a critical condition, they still don't practice. It is terrible. Diligent people are usually waiting for the doctor's verdict. This shows their laziness. 'Diligence' is the opposite of 'laziness'.

How serious is this attitude? Even if I die in the next moment, I would rather sleep than practice. Even if the ceiling is going to collapse and crush me: "Don't disturb my dream. I'm still enjoying it." It is like living in confusion as a drunkard. It is horrible. This behavior is foolish. The less you practice, the more ignorant you get. If you are not healthy, your brain will not function well. You are narrow-

minded as well. Only practice stimulates us to become smarter, wiser, and more broad-minded, so we are more reasonable and sensible when conducting ourselves and doing things. We come closer to the greater mental state of a saint. You will be the greatest winner. Diligence leads to success. Without diligent practice, you will be abandoned by reality.

Maybe, at a young age, you will suffer all kinds of illness. Even if you are very educated, you still do foolish things. Keep practicing brings us health, not only physically, but also mentally at a higher mental state. You say, "I listen to Master's teachings when I am free." Or "I am learning other great cultivators' and master's teachings, too. This will help me." Yes, I believe that. However, it will only bring you inspiration and knowledge. Without actual practice, you will not experience the essence. Your true practice and experience offer the most genuine insights. In a movie, you are amazed by the scenery of a beautiful place. But, if you actually get there and see it in person, the feeling could be very different. Watching actors eating food in a movie, such as peaches, apples, plums, or maybe a piece of cake, is a totally different feeling from actually eating. Actual practice brings actual realization.

Without actual practice, the realization is fake. You think you are enlightened, but that state of enlightenment is not integrated into your inner world yet. So listening to the teachings, you think you are enlightened. You are greatly touched and inspired. Yet, when you wake up the next morning, you are still ignorant, silly, lazy, and bad-tempered. Without diligent practice, we will not achieve such wisdom. What a pity! You know the dharma and the truth, but you have no action at all. It is a pity, as you are just one step away from integrating your mental state and wisdom into one. Then you will become a wise person. Wise people's words and their actions are synchronized.

The three treasures in Buddhism are faith, vows, and action. With faith, we have belief; with belief, we have vows. With faith and vows, you just don't act. Then in the end, you can only be going to hell. What's hell? All your confused, wrong behaviors, such as continuing to harm and do foolish things. Gambling costs your family a fortune, but you think you are smart enough to win. This is what foolish people do. They don't practice diligently.

During our practice, we may have wonderful sensations; sometimes, we feel nothing; sometimes, we have no faith. Sometimes, wealth, sex, fame, and personal interests attract us. We should take all these as tests in life. Don't be attached to them. Once you are attached to them, you will be trapped. Diligence

is to act as planned. With vows, we must carry them out. This way you can achieve the highest mental state in life.